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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 04 BUENOS AIRES 000411

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DEPT FOR P HEIDE BRONKE
WHA FOR TOM SHANNON

E.O. 12958: DECL: 03/02/2017

TAGS: PREL PGOV ECON PTER AA ASEC ETRD IAEA CU HA

IR, XF, CO, VZ, DP, AR

SUBJECT: ARGENTINA: FEBRUARY 9 BURNS/SHANNON MEETING WITH
FOREIGN MINISTRY OFFICIALS

REF: A. BUENOS AIRES 000173

1B. SECSTATE 16451

1C. SECSTATE 15808

Classified By: Ambassador E. Anthony Wayne for Reasons 1.4 (b) and (d).

1.(C) SUMMARY: Foreign Minister Jorge Taiana's working lunch for U/S Burns and delegation February 9 provided an opportunity for consultation on a wide range of foreign policy priorities. U/S Burns raised several areas for improved cooperation between the U.S. and Argentina: Haiti, Cuba, Bolivia, GOA participation in a NATO peacekeeping initiative, and a U.S.-Russian nuclear terrorism initiative. He also clarified the U.S. position on Venezuela, the follow-on to Plan Colombia, Iran, and the Middle East peace process. Taiana and members of his delegation reiterated the message that Argentina seeks a respectful and cooperative relationship with the U.S., raised concerns over the Doha round, and discussed specific issues of regional stability.
END SUMMARY.

12. (C) U.S. Participants:

-- Under Secretary for Political Affairs R. Nicolas Burns
-- Assistant Secretary for Western Hemisphere Affairs
Thomas Shannon
-- Ambassador Earl Anthony Wayne
-- DCM Michael Matera
-- William McIlhenny, Member, Policy Planning Council (S/P)
-- Heide Bronke, P Special Assistant
-- Michelle Baldwin, Notetaker

Argentine Participants:

-- Foreign Minister Jorge Taiana
-- Vice Foreign Minister Roberto Garcia Moritan
-- Secretary for International Trade Alfredo Chiaradia
-- Under Secretary for Economic Integration and Mercosur
Eduardo Sigal
-- Under Secretary for Foreign Policy Luis Capaggli
-- Under Secretary for Latin America Agustine Colombo
Sierra
-- Director General for North American Affairs Vicente
Espeche Gil
-- Chief of Staff of FM Taiana, Alberto D'Alotto
-- Maria Belen Garcia Alcat, Notetaker

13. (C) On February 9, Under Secretary Burns, Assistant

Secretary Shannon, and Ambassador Wayne, met with Argentine

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Foreign Minister Jorge Taiana, both in a small restricted meeting (see septel) and in a broader discussion over lunch.

Taiana welcomed the USG delegation and praised the close relations between Argentina and the U.S.

Doha Round

¶4. (C) Taiana asked Foreign Ministry Trade Secretary Alfredo Chiaradia to open the conversation with his views on the Doha round. Chiaradia emphasized the importance of agriculture to Argentina and other developing countries and that a successful round will require "sensible" trade-offs that are balanced and fair. Repeating arguments he made two weeks earlier to Deputy USTR John Veroneau (see reftel A), Chiaradia said that Argentina could not agree to developed nation demands for NAMA tariff cuts in the 70 percent range.

He made it clear that Argentina would not succumb to a negotiating process whereby a small group reached agreement and expected others to follow. He added that the GOA shares our desire for increased agricultural access from developing countries. On bilateral trade issues, Chiaradia said he is "quite happy" with the progress of trade relations, particularly after GSP was renewed for Argentina. On the regional level, he noted that Argentina wants to protect Mercosur because the organization plays an important role in "balancing" South America.

¶5. (C) Ambassador Wayne said that President Bush had made it clear that a positive outcome in the Doha round is a USG priority. He noted that everyone will have to give up some part of their positions to reach an agreement, but that some

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countries are not willing to take the necessary steps. On bilateral trade issues, he noted the U.S. desire for better IPR protection in Argentina.

Haiti

¶6. (C) U/S Burns explained that the U.S. is providing increased economic aid for Haiti to help sustain MINUSTAH, the United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti, and to ensure the stability of the Preval government. Vice FM Garcia Moritan said that Argentina is planning to be more active on Haiti. He said that the GOA will attend a South American initiative meeting in Lima in early March that will, among other actions, discuss calling for a UNSC special session on Haiti. Garcia Moritan said that the group would like to approach the new UNSC president in March to raise attention for Haiti. U/S Burns expressed U.S. support for this initiative. Garcia Moritan added, however, that Argentina cannot maintain troops in Haiti forever, as in the case of Cyprus, and that further progress needs to be seen in the coming months.

¶7. (C) U/S Burns raised the importance of a one-year extension of the MINUSTAH mandate (see reftel C) and asked the FM to intervene with the Chinese to help encourage their support. The FM said Argentina would weigh in with the Chinese.

Cuba

¶8. (C) U/S Burns expressed the U.S. hope that Argentina will lead Latin America in encouraging democracy and human rights in Cuba. He underscored the need for partners in the hemisphere to maintain a dialogue on Cuba and encourage a

peaceful transition to democracy. A/S Shannon urged Argentina to push Cuba to release its political prisoners. Garcia Moritan suggested that U.S. legislation would have to change in order to facilitate more economic openness in Cuba. He said that if there were a broader scenario of openness toward Cuba, it would be easier for Latin America to participate in democratization efforts. Ambassador Wayne and A/S Shannon replied that Latin American leadership on these issues was important for creating new opportunities.

Bolivia

¶ 9. (C) U/S Burns explained that the State Department had five months ago agreed to the renewal of counternarcotics (CN) assistance to Bolivia, but that we were only one month away from having to repeat the certification process. He said that the U.S. did not see any indication that Bolivian President Evo Morales had made a real effort to reduce coca plantings, which would make recertification difficult. U/S Burns asked Taiana for advice on how to engage Bolivia on the drug issue. Taiana said that this is a complicated issue for Argentina as well; both coca production and import are illegal in Argentina, but there is a coca chewing tradition in the northern provinces. Given this, Morales is asking Argentina to accept exports from Bolivia. Garcia Moritan said that the GOA shares U.S. concerns over drug trafficking in Bolivia. Ambassador Wayne noted the rising Argentine consumption of paco, a cocaine residual byproduct, and its consequences on crime and public health. Garcia Moritan said that this epidemic is on the top of the GOA agenda.

Colombia

¶ 10. (C) U/S Burns explained the Administration's efforts to renew Plan Colombia this year and the importance it has on stemming global drug flows. He said that the plan has received significant support from the U.S. Congress, though questions remain as to military abuses and human rights

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violations in Colombia. He mentioned that Colombia still needs to demonstrate that its judicial system is effectively trying and prosecuting criminals. He underscored U.S. concerns about cross-border drug flows into Venezuela and how Hugo Chavez might be exacerbating the problem. A/S Shannon explained that we are seeing increasing political ties between the FARC/ELN and Chavez's administration. Taiana said that he believes the FARC had political origins, but that now their activity appears to be little more than trying to survive on drug trafficking.

Iran

¶ 11. (C) On non-regional issues, U/S Burns made clear that the U.S. has no intention to go to war with Iran. He explained that the U.S. is solely focused on a diplomatic solution to the current nuclear arms crisis with Iran. He also said that U.S. troops have detained some Iranians in Iraq because they were teaching explosive technology to Iraqis and causing the deaths of U.S. troops. Taiana said he was pleased to hear about the USG commitment to a diplomatic solution to the crisis with Iran and agreed fully with this approach. He stressed the need for the international community to work together to engage Iran. U/S Burns said that Iran is violating the directives of the IAEA and is likely to make an announcement of further nuclear developments on the upcoming anniversary of their revolution. Burns noted that the U.S. is working with Russia on a second draft UNSC resolution aimed at pushing Iran towards negotiations. China and Russia agree that we cannot sit by

and do nothing while Iran continues nuclear research.

NATO Peacekeeping Partnership

¶12. (C) U/S Burns raised a recent NATO initiative to establish a global partnership with countries that are effective in peacekeeping missions. He noted that Brazil and Argentina should be included in this partnership based on their demonstrated peacekeeping performance. However, U/S Burns said that he understood from press coverage that Argentina has withdrawn its defense attach from Brussels (and SACEUR), which would make it much more difficult to coordinate this partnership. Garcia Moritan explained that the GOA was studying the redeployment of military attachs worldwide to provide broader coverage, including in many locations that now do not have military attachs. Taiana explained that the GOA had no intention of cutting ties with NATO but that it is becoming politically difficult to maintain Argentine troops in non-UN peacekeeping missions. As an example, he indicated that Argentina will be "redeploying" its peacekeeping force in Kosovo. He said that they were not abandoning their peacekeeping efforts, just redeploying the forces. He said Argentina would find a way to maintain its links with NATO.

Global Initiative to Combat Nuclear Terrorism

¶13. (C) U/S Burns raised the Global Initiative to Combat Nuclear Terrorism (reftel B) and invited the GOA to sign on to the principles of the initiative and to participate. Both Taiana and Garcia Moritan were interested in learning more about the initiative and how the GOA could participate. Non-papers provided in reftel B were left with the MFA.

Middle East Peace

¶14. (C) Garcia Moritan asked how the U.S. sees the situation in the Middle East. U/S Burns briefed the group on the evolving USG approach to the Middle East peace process, including Secretary Rice's upcoming trip to the region to explore means for a new push to resolve the Arab-Israeli conflict. Burns said that Secretary Rice looked forward to

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discussing the new approach with Taiana when he visits Washington in the near future.

Ethanol/Biofuels

¶15. (SBU) Foreign Trade Secretary Chiaradia asked about talks on ethanol in Brazil and indicated that the GOA is interested in participating in any USG initiative to promote the global production of ethanol. U/S Burns said that he had already publicly welcomed Argentine participation in biofuels initiatives in his speech earlier that day at the Argentine Council for International Relations (CARI), and expressed hope we could develop a dialogue to take cooperation forward.

WAYNE